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The visits of the rulers of Russia's Central Asian protectorates to St. Petersburg at the turn of the 20th century: communicative practice

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Abstract: This article considers the visits of the rulers of Russia's Central Asian protectorates to St. Petersburg as a means for the imperial authorities to communicate with the Muslim elite. It argues out that gifts, decorations and lavish receptions were all means to exert psychological pressure on the Emir of Bukhara and the Khan of Khiva. Together with other practices, these were meant integrate the Muslim elite into Russian society. As relations with the protectorates evolved, the Russian government developed a plan to annex them. However, the ministry of foreign affairs effectively blocked the move. At the same time, St Petersburg accorded extensive powers to the protectorates' rulers that even exceeded those of Turkestan's governor-general, encouraging them to consider themselves to be independent rulers. At the same time, differences in outlook, faith, and ways to communicate led the protectorates to separate themselves from the Russian Empire and drove them into the arms its enemies during World War I.

Keywords: Russian protectorates, Bukhara Emirate, Khiva Khanate, Saint Petersburg, visits, communication techniques, gifts, awards, titles

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Визиты правителей среднеазиатских протекторатов России в Санкт-Петербург на рубеже XIX–XX вв.: коммуникативная практика

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Аннотация: Рассматриваются визиты правителей среднеазиатских протекторатов России в Санкт-Петербург как средство коммуникативного контакта российской власти с мусульманской элитой. Подчеркивается, что подарки, награды и пышные приемы являлись способом психологического воздействия на эмира и хана. Коммуникативные приемы во время визитов среднеазиатских правителей создавали условия для инкорпорирования мусульманской элиты в российское общество. В результате постепенного изменения взаимоотношений с протекторатами в высших эшелонах власти Российской империи созрел план присоединения данных территорий. Однако из-за противодействия МИДа, являвшегося давним соперником военного министерства в обсуждении среднеазиатских тем, было принято решение об отсрочке данного мероприятия.

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Во многом российское правительство само создало ситуацию, когда правители протекторатов получили большие полномочия, превышающие статус даже туркестанского генерал-губернатора. Это позволило им считать себя независимыми правителями. К тому же разница менталитета, конфессий и коммуникативной политики приводила к обособлению протекторатов от Российской империи и толкала их в объятия противников России в Первой мировой войне.

Ключевые слова: Русские протектораты, Бухарский эмират, Хивинское ханство, Санкт-Петербург, визиты, коммуникативные приемы, подарки, награды, титулы

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Introduction

By the 1870s, the Russian Empire had basically finished annexing Central Asia. After the appointment of the first Governor General of Turkestan in 1867, it also established protectorates over what was left of Bukhara and Khiva. According to the treaty with the Emirate of Bukhara of June 23, 1868, its ruler could only conduct diplomacy with Russia.¹ Meanwhile the “treaty of friendship” signed in Shahrissabz on September 24, 1873, provided for a Russian political representative in Bukhara, without whose consent the emir could not make any important political decisions.²

By the same token, on August 12, 1873, after surrendering to the Russian army, Khiva’s Khan Muhammad Rahim II concluded the Treaty of Gandumkan with the imperial government. According to its terms, the khan recognized himself as a “humble servant of the Emperor of All Russia” and yielded the right to carry out any relations with his neighboring rulers without the approval of Turkestan’s governor-general.³

Thus, although the legal status of these territories as protectorates was not enshrined in any legislation, Russia treated both the emir and the khan as its subjects.

Much research has been carried out about Russia’s relationship with its protectorates. Since it focuses on various aspects and was written at different times – pre-revolutionary,⁴ Soviet⁵ and contemporary⁶ – opinions about the protectorates and their

¹ Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (hereafter AVPRI), f. 147, op. 485, d. 298, l. 49.

² *Ibid.*, d. 301, l. 16.

³ “Gendemianskiĭ mirnyi dogovor mezhdū Rossiei i Khivoi,” in *Pod stiagom Rossii: sb. arkhivnykh dokumentov* (Moscow: Russkaia kniga, 1992), 348–351.

⁴ N.A. Maev, *Ocherki Bukharskogo khanstva* (Tashkent: B. Bezobrazov & K^o Press, 1875); D.N. Logofet, *Strana bespravīa. Bukharskoe khanstvo i ego sovremennoe sostoianie* (St. Petersburg: V. Berezovskii Publ., 1909); *Idem.*, *Bukharskoe khanstvo pod russkim protektoratom*. (St. Petersburg: V. Berezovskii Publ., 1911); S.V. Zhukovskii, *Snosheniia Rossii s Bukharoi i Khivoi za poslednee trekhstotletie* (Petrograd: N.I. Evstifeev Press., 1915).

⁵ A.M. Riabinskii, “Tsarskaia Rossiia i Bukhara v epokhu imperializma,” *Istoriĭ-marksist*, no. 4 (1941): 3–25; I. Fioletov, “Bukharskoe i Khivinskoe khanstva i otnosheniia ikh s Rossiei,” *Istoriĭskii zhurnal*, no. 3 (1941): 68–79; I.V. Pogorelskii, *Ocherki ekonomicheskoi i politicheskoi istorii Khivinskogo khanstva kontsa XIX nachala XX vv. (1873–1917)* (Leningrad: Leningradskii universitet Publ., 1968); T.G. Tukhtametov, *Rossiia i Khiva v kontse XIX nachale XX v.* (Moscow: Nauka Publ., 1969); *Idem.*, *Rossiia i Bukharskii emirat v nachale XX v.* (Dushanbe: Irfon Publ., 1977); N.A. Khalfin, *Rossia i khanstva Srednei Azii (pervaia polovina XIX v.)* (Moscow: Nauka Publ., 1974); *Idem.*, *Rossiia i Bukharskii e’mirat na zapadnom Pamire (konets*

relationship with Russia differ. Yet, scholars have not adequately considered the nature of the political dialog during Bukharan and Khivan state visits to Russia. Two who did address the question are R. Iu. Pochekaev⁷, who examined the personal factor, and S.V. Dmitriev,⁸ in his article about the emir of Bukhara's gifts during his visits to St. Petersburg.

Nevertheless, the way the protectorates communicated with the Russian government when visiting the imperial capital yields some important insights into their relationship, including its attitude towards the emir and the khan, the legal status of their states within the Russian Empire, as well as how the dialogue itself evolved.

This article is based on research in the Russian State Historical Archive, which enabled its author to study how the relationship between Russia and its protectorates developed over the course of the three decades from the 1880s to the outbreak of World War I.

The Emir of Bukhara's visits to St. Petersburg

The evolution of the Emir of Bukhara's relationship with Russia led to changes in the empire's ceremony for welcoming high-ranking guests.

After the conclusion of the 1873 treaty of "friendship," even Russian tourists who arrived in Bukhara were greeted with great respect, some being granted a private audience with Emir Muzaffar (1860–85). In all likelihood, he acted out of fear that his land would be annexed to the empire outright.⁹ But over time, as the emir's worries lessened, his attitude changed, and he began to insist that such visitors respect his "royal" status. His successors, Sayyid Abd al-Ahad (1885–10) and Sayyid Mir Muhammad Alim Khan (1910–20) continued to observe this tradition.

The fourth emir from the Manghit dynasty, Muzaffar had probably never visited Russia. Nevertheless, his 25-year relationship with the empire underwent some momen-

XIX – nachalo XX v.) (Moscow: Nauka Publ., 1975); D.Iu. Arapov, *Bukharskoe khanstvo v russkoi vostochno-istoriografii* (Moscow: MGU Publ., 1981).

⁶ S.N. Brezhneva, "Bukharskii emirat perioda protektorata Rossii v trudakh uchenogo-vostokoveda D.N. Logofeta," *Vestnik Kostromskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta im. N.A. Nekrasova* 15, no. 4 (2009): 12–17; "Gendemianskii mirni dogovor mezhdru Rossiei i Khivoi," 348–351; S.V. Dmitriev, "'Bukharskie podarki': starinnyi vostochnyi obychai v kontekste rossiisko-bukharskikh otnoshenii kontsa XIX – nachala XX v.," in *Rakhmat-name: Sb. statei k 70-letiu R.R. Rakhimova* (St. Petersburg: MAE' RAN Publ., 2008), 117–129; A.G. Nedvetskii, *Praviteli Bukhary*, accessed April 14, 2021, <https://greylib.align.ru/410/a-g-nedveckii-praviteli-bukhary.html>; G.N. Nikitenko, "Khiva pod protektoratom Rossiiskoi imperii," *Obshchestvennyye nauki v Uzbekistane*, no. 7–8 (1997): 30–41; T.V. Perevezentseva, "Bukharskii emirat pod protektoratom Rossiiskoi imperii (konets XIX – nachalo XX veka)," in *Istoricheskie issledovaniia: materialy' III Mezhdunar. nauch. konf. (g. Kazan' mai 2015 g.)* (Kazan: Buk Publ., 2015), 13–18, accessed April 28, 2021, <https://moluch.ru/conf/hist/archive/129/7342/>; R.Iu. Pochekaev, "Vkluchenie Bukharskogo emirata i Khivinskogo khanstva v tamozhennuu chertu Rossiiskoi imperii (1895 g.)," *Pravo. Zhurnal Vysshei shkolei ekonomiki*, no. 3 (2016): 172–184; Idem., *Gubernatory i khany. Lichnostnyi faktor pravovoi politiki Rossiiskoi imperii v Tsentral'noi Azii XVIII – nachalo XX v.* (Moscow: VShE' Pudl., 2017); Idem., "Politiko-pravovye realii Bukhary v period ustanovleniia rossiiskogo protektorata," *Vostochnyi arkhiv*, no. 1 (2017): 21–30.

⁷ R.Iu. Pochekaev, *Gubernatory i khany*.

⁸ S.V. Dmitriev, "'Bukharskie podarki'," 117–129.

⁹ R.Iu. Pochekaev, "Politiko-pravovye realii Bukhary v period ustanovleniia rossiiskogo protektorata," *Vostochnyi arkhiv*, no. 1 (2017): 21–30.

tous changes. Most important were the repeated defeats in the war against Russia, which forced him to surrender Samarkand, his most important city, and accept becoming the tsar's protectorate.

The new relationship seemed to be harmonious. In 1883 the Emir Muzaffar was awarded the Russian Order of Saint Anne first class with diamonds, to reciprocate for his decorating Emperor Alexander III with his dynasty's Order of the Rising Star. Major General Prince F.A. Wittgenstein travelled to Bukhara to bestow the Russian medal, a visit the diplomat V.V. Krestovskii, vividly described.¹⁰

Of all the three emirs, Sayyid Abd al-Ahad (in Russian sources, Sayyid-Mir-Abul-Ahad) made the most trips to Russia. A fairly well-educated polyglot, he knew a little Russian. He first made his way to St. Petersburg in 1883, when the emperor officially recognized him as heir to the Bukharan throne. War Minister P.S. Vannovskii wrote Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, the minister of the imperial court, that "Sayyid Abd al-Ahad-bey ... then represented the late emir at the coronation (of Alexander III)."¹¹

Sayyid Abd al-Ahad was proclaimed emir after the death of his father Muzaffar in October 1885 and paid his first official visit to Russia "as the ruler of Bukhara" in 1893.¹² However, he did send an embassy to the capital in 1889, which included a reception by Alexander III on March 25. Its members also attended a church parade and received official gifts of 23,000 rubles. They were also to bring the diamond insignia of the Order of the White Eagle to their ruler. Vannovskii's letter to the count included a list of all of the gifts "according to the custom of giving presents to the Central Asian embassies arriving on different occasions."¹³ It was an impressive tally, and included 18 items for the emir, including brocade and velvet robes, a velvet coat, and a silver tea set with gilded eagles. There were also nine gifts for the emir's messenger, Dzhan Mirza bey Pervanachi, seven for the embassy's senior counsellor, as well as others for all members of their retinue.¹⁴

Alexander approved the emir's visit in July 1892, and Turkestan's governor-general, Baron A.B. Vrevskii followed up with telegrams about the emir's desire also to see Tiflis and Vladikavkaz on the return trip along with his son, and about how many people should accompany them. There was also extensive correspondence between Vannovskii, Vorontsov-Dashkov and N.S. Petrov, the head of the Office of His Imperial Majesty (H.I.M.), to decide on the emir's route. However, when a cholera epidemic broke out in Central Asia,

the emperor expressed his desire that the emir should postpone his trip until a more favorable time.¹⁵

Baron Vrevskii reported to the war minister that the emir set off on his journey from Bukhara on December 7, 1892.¹⁶ Vannovskii in turn wrote Vorontsov-Dashkov

¹⁰ V.V. Krestovskii, *V gostiakh u emira bukharskogo* (St. Petesburg: A.S. Suvorin Press, 1887).

¹¹ Russian State Historical Archive (hereafter – RGIA), f. 468, op. 42, d. 1036, l. 23 ob.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., d. 901, l. 1–2.

¹⁴ Ibid., l. 3–5.

¹⁵ Ibid., d. 1036, l. 15.

about the emir's itinerary: he was expected to proceed to Baku, then by a steamer of the Caspian flotilla to Tiflis, Vladikavkaz, Riazan and Moscow, after which he would arrive in the capital. General Staff Colonel D.V. Putiata, who was to meet the Bukharan ruler in Baku, was ordered to provide appropriate accommodations, while the head of the Asian Section of the General Staff, Lieutenant General A.P. Protsenko, was responsible for his stay in St. Petersburg, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to introduce him to the emperor.¹⁷

Sayyid Abd al-Ahad arrived in Baku by steamer on December 17, 1892, where he was solemnly greeted by the city's leading officials, as well as Colonel Putiata, who would accompany him to St. Petersburg. The emir stayed in the house of Hasan-bek, where the governor of Baku Province, V.P. Rogge, visited him. As he continued his journey, the emir was also met by vice-governors in Tiflis, he visited the chief of the civilian administration in the Caucasus, S.A. Sheremetev, after which the latter visited the emir in Moscow. Sayyid Abd al-Ahad made a detailed entry of his visit to Baku and Tiflis in his diary.¹⁸

In Moscow the emir was initially to be accommodated in one of its best hotels. However, Putiata wired that this would be "extremely undesirable" and suggested that he stay the Grand Kremlin Palace instead.¹⁹ The visit to the old capital lasted from 27 to 31 December and cost the imperial treasury 3,209 rubles 65 kopecks.²⁰

Sayyid Abd al-Ahad arrived in St. Petersburg by the Nikolaev railway on January 1, and was accommodated in the Winter Palace, in the same chambers the Persian Shah had occupied on his earlier visit. Meanwhile, his officials stayed in rented premises. The emir presented his gifts the next day. As described in detail in the popular weekly *Niva*, they included a saber in a gold sheath studded with diamonds for the Russian emperor and an umbrella made entirely of pearls for his consort, as well as horses of various breeds.²¹ Together with his subsequent visits, the emir's largesse amounted to an enormous amount of expensive gifts. Some of them were given to museums, but most were stored in the imperial family's palaces.²² It was also customary to give presents to officials of various ranks, including those in Turkestan.

Rodina, another popular magazine, described "His Lordship" as a handsomely built dark-haired man, "with a very expressive face and a large pitch-black thick beard."²³ Awed by such a high-ranking personage, it reported that the emir admired Russian culture and promoted it in his country, going on gushingly to report that he had abolished slavery, reduced the size of the army, and tore down prisons – little of which corresponded to reality.

¹⁶ RGIA, I. 20.

¹⁷ Ibid., d. 20–22.

¹⁸ Abdulakhad, *Tochni perevod dnevnika ego svetlosti emira Bukharskogo* (Kazan: Tipo-litografiia universiteta Press, 1894).

¹⁹ RGIA, f. 468, op. 42, d. 1036, l. 29, 30.

²⁰ Ibid., op. 17, d. 238, l. 1.

²¹ "Podarki emira Bukharskogo, podnesennye Gosudariu Imperatoru, Gosudaryne Imperatritse i drugim Chlenam Avgusteishego Doma," *Niva*, no. 3 (1893): 74.

²² See: S.V. Dmitriev, " 'Bukharskie podarki' ," 119.

²³ See: A.G. Nedvetskii, *Praviteli Bukhary*.

Sayyid Abd al-Ahad arrived together with his twelve-year-old son, who, with emperor's consent, was officially recognized as his heir.²⁴ In keeping with a policy of integrating members of the empire's Muslim elite into Russian society, the lad was enrolled in the Nikolaev Cadet Corps for three years, where he acquired a perfect command of Russian and made many friends and acquaintances among the children of the empire's highest ranks. After completing his studies in April 1896, he was promoted to cornet and enrolled in the Terek Cossack Army as an aide-de-camp. He returned to Bukhara with the title of Heir to His Highness the Emir of Bukhara.

The Emir was accommodated in the Winter Palace in the chambers that had been occupied by the Persian Shah before him. Officials were quartered in rented premises.²⁵

It was also a common practice to award orders to the relatives of important officials. Already after the end of his visit of October 1893, the emir sent the tsar's brother, Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich, a diamond insignia of his Order of the Crown with a ribbon, as the latter reported in a letter.²⁶ Established by Sayyid Abd al-Ahad in 1886, it was awarded both to his own officials and those of the Russian government.

Meanwhile, after Alexander III's death, the emir of Bukhara was granted a portrait decoration worth 3,992 rubles, which the messenger Astankul-biy-Divanbegi delivered to Bukhara.²⁷

The emir visited St. Petersburg again in 1896, on the occasion of the coronation of Nicholas II. On May 12, the new emperor granted him the title "Highness."²⁸ This signaled that he was regarded with greater respect than the Khan of Khiva, whom he titled "Excellency."²⁹ Whereas the former honorific was only accorded to a sovereign's close relatives, other princes and counts could claim to be addressed as "your excellency."

Two years earlier, both Bukhara and Khiva were joined to the Russian Empire in a customs union, which implied future economic integration while maintaining their legal independence.³⁰ Another step towards closer links had already been taken in 1893, as an economic downturn prompted Russia to begin minting Bukhara's tanga with the same ligature as its own twenty-kopeck coin. As Turkestan's governor wrote the Minister of Finance, this "will be tantamount to a complete monetary union with Russia,"³¹ since the emir could no longer produce the coin without the former's consent. These developments heralded a shift towards greater Russian influence on its Central Asian protectorates.

Emir Sayyid Abd al-Ahad visited Russia again in the summer of 1898. That May, War Minister A.N. Kuropatkin proposed reducing the emir's gifts to Turkestan's governor-general. However, familiar with the local customs, the minister urged that this be done

²⁴ RGIA, f. 468, op. 42, d. 1036, l. 6 rev.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 19.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 528, op. 1, d. 52, l. 3 rev.

²⁷ RGIA, f. 468, op. 8, d. 192, l. 1, 4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, d. 732, l. 2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 4.

³⁰ R.Iu. Pochekaev, "Vkliuchenie Bukharskogo emirata," 181.

³¹ RGIA, f. 570, op.76, d. 3565, l. 4 rev.

diplomatically, to avoid hurting the emir's feelings.³² The emperor approved the suggestion three months late.³³ Nevertheless, gifts continued to arrive in Tashkent. Furthermore, the decision did not apply to the imperial court, and the question was not raised again until 1910.

As for the tsar, in 1898 the Office of H.I.M. allocated 7,040 rubles for the gifts to the emir and his entourage, including a diamond portrait medallion worth 5,815 rubles.³⁴

In winter 1902, the emir was greeted with the same lavish splendor as monarchs of foreign states. He stayed in Moscow from February 6 to 9, once again at the Grand Kremlin Palace. The Moscow Palace Administration, took out a loan of 900 rubles 38 kopecks to cover the cost,³⁵ and it requested another 870 rubles and 5 kopeks to lodge him on the return trip, from 24 to 26 February.³⁶ During the emir's stay in the capital, from February 10 to 23, the Office of H.I.M. allocated 15,019 rubles for presents to the guests; a little more than 2,000 rubles were charged to the War Ministry's account.³⁷

To pay for the stay of the emir with his retinue as well as for the gifts, funds were withdrawn from the Office of the Minister of the Imperial Court, which was responsible for ensuring its activities, from the Office of H.I.M., which looked after the personal property of the emperor's family, and from the Ministry of War. Judging by their correspondence, there was constant bickering over who would pay the costs. Thus, in 1898 Petrov firmly resisted War Minister Kuropatkin's request on the grounds that they were not the responsibility of the Office of H.I.M.³⁸ Nevertheless, according to the sources, the funds were allocated.

The emir paid another visit to St. Petersburg four years later, arriving in the capital at about 8 p.m on November 19, 1906. In accordance with the established procedure, his visit was preceded by telegrams from the governor-general of Turkestan with lists of those accompanying him, including the political agent, actual state councilor Ia.Ia. Liutsh, and the military translator D. Asfandiarov, as well as the usual correspondence about gifts given and received.³⁹ On October 19, 1906, War Minister A.F. Rödiger sent a secret letter to the head of the Office of H.I.M., Prince N.D. Obolenskii, to report that, due to the current political unrest (no doubt linked to the recent revolutionary events), any allocations from the treasury for the visit might lead to undesirable rumors among the population. Therefore, he suggested contributing a larger amount for the emir's stay from the Office of H.I.M., while reducing the total to 25,000 rubles. Any additional expenses should be also be borne by the office.⁴⁰

³² RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 173, l. 175 rev.

³³ Ibid., l. 176 rev.

³⁴ Ibid., f. 468, op. 8, d. 928, l. 7.

³⁵ Ibid., op. 14, d. 1000, l. 1.

³⁶ Ibid., l. 6.

³⁷ Ibid., op. 8, d. 928, l. 2.

³⁸ Ibid., op. 13, d. 2239, l. 2.

³⁹ Ibid., f. 472, op. 66, d. 288, l. 38–39.

⁴⁰ Ibid., f. 468, op. 8, d. 928, l. 1 rev.

There is a note: “The Highest permission was received” in the margin of Obolenskii’s message about the matter.⁴¹ However, probably on his own initiative, Obolenskii reduced the initial amount to 20,000 rubles, while the state’s treasury also allocated the same sum for the emir’s visit.⁴² The gifts were presented to the emir and his suite in the Winter Palace on November 27, 1906.⁴³

Meanwhile, Sayyid Abd al-Ahad had already given his presents at the Alexander Palace in Tsarskoie Selo five days earlier.⁴⁴ Those for the emperor were to be stored in the Hermitage, while the Office of H.I.M. kept the gifts to the tsarevich.

Sayyid Abd al-Ahad’s last visit to St. Petersburg was also preceded by discussions of what was to be spent on gifts. On December 1, 1909, the new war minister, V.A. Sukhomlinov, sent the minister of the imperial court, Baron V.B. Freedericksz, an estimate of 15,000 rubles, less than what had been disbursed four years earlier. He also reported that he intended to present some weapons to the emir during the upcoming visit.⁴⁵ The baron accordingly asked the emperor for permission to issue a loan from the Office of H.I.M. of 15,000 rubles, which was approved.⁴⁶ Thus, the cost of gifts was gradually reduced.

Discussions about the emir’s gifts to high-ranking Russian officials were resumed in 1909. That year, on August 10–11, 1909, Turkestan’s governor general A.V. Samsonov chaired a meeting in Tashkent that resolved proposing a prohibition on accepting any such presents.⁴⁷ The matter was taken up by the Council of Ministers on January 28, 1910. One of its members pointed out that the emir’s gifts to the tsar were a sort of tribute. According to Central Asian custom, the beys dependent on the emir present him with such a “toksan-tartuk” tribute. Therefore, Russia should maintain to practice to emphasize Bukhara’s dependence.⁴⁸

The emir’s visit in 1910 coincided with the 25th anniversary of his rule. To mark the event, he was presented with a diamond eagle for the chain of the Order of St. Andrew, for non-Christians, that he had been granted two years earlier.⁴⁹ He also received a diamond breastplate with the number “XXV” for the order’s blue ribbon for this august occasion. The chamberlain of the imperial court, who headed the Office of H.I.M., completed a report about the gifts to the emir and his retinue on February 8, 1910.⁵⁰

This visit was marked by another significant event. The emir had previously asked the Russian government for permission to build a mosque in St. Petersburg, donating 350,000 to buy the land and another and 100,000 for its construction. To help defray the cost, he had raised more than 200,000 rubles in donations from Bukhara’s mer-

⁴¹ RGIA, d. 1040, l. 1.

⁴² *Ibid.*, d. 928, l. 24.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 29.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, d. 1040, l. 1 rev.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 2.

⁴⁷ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 173, l. 193.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 177.

⁴⁹ RGIA., f. 468, op. 8, d. 1040, l. 15.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 24.

chants.⁵¹ The capital's authorities invited the emir to a ceremony to lay the foundation stone on February 3, 1910, to coincide with the 25th anniversary of his reign. The mosque became the largest in Europe and still adorns the northern capital today. According to *Niva*:

the emir was perfectly happy with the way the population of St. Petersburg greeted him. When leaving, he said that 'on this joyful day for him as a Muslim, and donated 5,000 rubles for capital's poor.'⁵²

The magazine carried a photograph of the emir surrounded by St. Petersburg's Islamic population.

The ceremony marked the end of Sayyid Abd al-Ahad's visits to the Russian capital. As Turkestan's governor immediately reported to the emperor, the emir died on the night of 22–23 February in Kermin. Samsonov had previously suggested that Sayyid Mir Muhammad Alim Khan, the heir to the throne, take the reins into his hands.⁵³ Sayyid Mir Alim Khan also informed the emperor of his father's death. According to the governor's instructions, as conveyed by Liutsh, Sayyid Mir Alim Khan "became an interim head of the country." Significantly, it was signed "aide-de-camp Sayyid-Mir-Alim". Foreign Minister S.D. Sazonov asked for and received the tsar's permission to call the new emir "Highness." Meanwhile, the emir also gave 100,000 rubles to the political agent and asked him to transfer the money to the Red Cross in memory of his late father, "who had always sympathized with this this society's needs."⁵⁴

The new emir came to St. Petersburg already on May 11, 1911. The usual correspondence had already begun a month earlier, one again with a telegram from Turkestan's governor listing the names of all persons in the visitor's entourage. According to the established procedure, he was to be met in provincial towns along the way by civic dignitaries, and would be escorted from Orenburg to the capital,⁵⁵ where all the tsar's ministers were to meet with him during his stay.

Because of the costs of the Office of H.I.M. Cabinet, some 15,000 rubles were allocated for the emir's stay.⁵⁶ On the day of his audience with the tsar,

His Highness the Emir of Bukhara, listed in the Terek Cossack army, Aide De Camp Colonel Sayyid-Mir-Alim was promoted to major general with a transfer to the Suite of H.I.M.⁵⁷

Nicholas also awarded him the Order of the White Eagle with diamonds.⁵⁸

Emir Sayyid Mir-Alim's next visit, in February 1913, was timed to coincide with the celebration of the Romanov dynasty's tercentenary. Once again, the Office budgeted

⁵¹ A.G. Nevitskii, *Praviteli Bukhary*.

⁵² "Zakladka mecheti v Sankt-Peterburge," *Niva*, no. 8 (1910): 160.

⁵³ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 173, l. 225.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 229, 233, 243.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 23, op. 1, d. 106, l. 8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 468, op. 8, d. 1167, l. 2–2 rev., 10–10 rev.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 13.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 21 rev.

15,000 rubles for his stay, as well as another 10,000 for the Khan of Khiva, who had also been invited to the celebrations.⁵⁹ To mark the occasion, a portrait of the emperor decorated with diamonds worth 5,000 rubles for the emir was delivered to the Winter on February 23 at 10 a.m.⁶⁰ Two days earlier, the first solemn service was held to coincide with the jubilee in the mosque still under construction in St. Petersburg.

The emir last trip to the imperial capital was in 1915. On December 30, he was promoted to lieutenant general in the Terek Cossack army and appointed adjutant general. The fact that the emir had a house built in the city suggests that he planned to pay more visits, but the Central Asian revolt in 1916 and the revolution the following year put an end to them.

The Khan of Khiva's visits to St. Petersburg at the end of the 19th – early 20th century

Russia's policy with regard to the Khanate of Khiva after its defeat was similar to its dealings with Bukhara, but there were some differences. Long before 1873, the khanate had been regarded as hostile to the empire. Memories were still fresh of the brutal massacre of Prince Aleksandr Bekovich-Cherkasskii's mission in 1717 as well as Orenburg Governor-General V.A. Perovskii's unsuccessful campaign in 1833. And Khiva remained a thorn in the empire's side. Despite the repeated efforts of Kaufmann, to negotiate Khan Muhammad Rahim (1864–10), refused to talk.

Believing that he would never be forgiven for his rout, the khan fled his capital when Russian troops occupied it. Although there were other suitable candidates for the throne, Kaufmann preferred to rely on the incumbent head of state, who was ultimately forced to agree becoming a vassal of the tsar.

As a mark of goodwill, in 1883 Emperor Alexander III awarded Muhammad Rahim the Order of St. Anne first class with diamonds during his visit to St. Petersburg. This order was meant for meritorious public service, and since it was also presented to the emir of Bukhara that year, the medal could be seen as the tsar's mark of respect to his vassals. The khan was also decorated with the Order of the White Eagle, a dynastic award, as would be the emir during his visit to the imperial capital two years later.

In 1896, Khan Muhammad Rahim arrived in St. Petersburg for the coronation of Nicholas II. On May 7, he and the emir were officially received by the imperial couple in the Petrovskii Palace. In honor of the occasion, the khan received a diamond monogram of Nicholas II and was granted the title of "Excellency."⁶¹

On May 26, 1896, Turkestan's governor wrote the minister of the imperial court to petition for the return of the khan's headdress, which had been taken by Russian troops during the assault on his palace in 1873, and was now in the Hermitage. The khan had seen this heirloom there during his visit in 1883 and now wanted to get it back. Baron

⁵⁹ RGIA, op. 44, d. 1336, l. 1 rev.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 5, 13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, f. 468, op. 8, d. 732, l. 4.

Vrevskii emphasized that the headdress was not of great value, but had sentimental value to the khan, as an heirloom from his ancestors.⁶² Count Vorontsov-Dashkov informed Vrevskii, “about the Sovereign’s sublime decision to return this headdress.”⁶³

In 1900, Khiva’s khan was awarded the Order of St. Alexander Nevskii, Russia’s highest decoration. During his visit to St. Petersburg that year, the heir to the Khivan throne received the Order of St. Anne of the first class with diamonds, version for non-Christians, and the monogram of His Majesty, also adorned with diamonds. Five people accompanying him were gold watches, seven received silver ones.⁶⁴ The Office of H.I.M. paid the cashier of the Ministry of the Imperial Court 4,216 rubles for the gifts to the khan’s heir and his entourage.⁶⁵

On September 16, 1905, War Minister Rödiger informed the general staff of a request of from Turkestan Governor-General N.N. Teviashev. During his repeated meetings with the khan, Teviashev had become convinced of the ruler’s sincere devotion to the emperor personally and the Russian Empire as a whole. Despite poor health, Muhammad-Rahim tried personally to keep peace and order among his subjects and, if possible, contain the aggressive Turkmen tribes. He pointed out that his heir provided him with much assistance. As a result, the governor petitioned for the khan to be awarded a portrait medallion with diamonds to wear on his chest, as well as promoting his son to the rank of colonel.⁶⁶

From 1902 the Khan of Khiva was given the title “Your Grace.” While more prestigious than “Excellency,” it was still inferior to that of “Highness” accorded to the emir. The tsar’s last important award to the Khan of Khiva was his promotion to cavalry general in January 1904, and to his heir, Army lieutenant colonel of the Orenburg Cossack’s. The tsar wrote “The highest permission for the request was received” on the margin of General Rödiger’s request.⁶⁷

On September 20, 1905, the head of the general staff’s Asian section, Major General F.N. Vasil’ev wrote the Office of H.I.M. to request a medallion with a portrait of Nicholas II, decorated with diamonds worth 5,000 rubles as soon as possible as a gift to the Khan of Khiva.⁶⁸

Although Muhammad-Rahim visited St. Petersburg much less often than the Emir of Bukhara, he was also in the emperor’s favor; Nicholas went on to decorate him with the diamond insignia of the Order of Alexander Nevskii, and the Order of St. Vladimir first class the following year.

The imperial treasury budgeted less money for gifts to Khiva’s khan than for the emir, when they stayed in St. Petersburg together. However, when the council of minis-

⁶² RGIA, op. 42, d. 2130, l. 1.

⁶³ Ibid., l. 3.

⁶⁴ Ibid., op. 8, d. 411, l. 11.

⁶⁵ Ibid., l. 12.

⁶⁶ Ibid., d. 901, l. 2.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., l. 4.

ters discussed abolishing the practice of accepting gifts from Russia's vassals in 1910, it also paid attention to Khiva, as had Turkestan's governor at his meeting. The foreign ministry sent a lengthy reply:

On the issue of the Khanate of Khiva, whose position is significantly different from that of the Emirate of Bukhara, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs joins the decision adopted in Tashkent and believes that the "status quo" in relation to this khanate will be preserved for the same reasons as for Bukhara.⁶⁹

In other words, the department also welcomed measures to end the custom for Bukhara and Khiva.⁷⁰

Surprisingly, both the rulers of the Russian protectorates died within one year from each other, four months apart. Mohammad-Rahim succumbed to cardioplegia on August 16, 1910. Turkestan's governor immediately wired his superiors about the sad event, adding that with "the permission of H.I.M.," Asfandiar Jurji Bahadur had already begun ruling the khanate.⁷¹

Khan Asfandiar paid official visits to St. Petersburg twice, and probably by design, both coincided with those of the Emir of Bukhara. Since there was less money in the coffers, the receptions more modest, and it was cheaper to host both of them at the same time.

As for the khan, his stay was allocated less money than for the emir: 10,000 rubles compared to 15,000.⁷² Much like the emir, the procedure for the khan's meetings in Turkestan's towns was entirely dependent on its governor, while in the provincial towns of Russia proper, their governors were to pay their respects only if his stay were long. At the same time, their representatives welcomed him as they arrived at the train station. In Moscow, the khan was greeted by a staff officer who escorted him to the capital. As for the final destination, here the head of the Asian Section of the General Staff, Major General S.V. Zeil, met him. Before his audience with the emperor, the khan saw the prime minister and some ministers, who would in turn visit him. The stay in St. Petersburg was limited to no more than a fortnight,⁷³ as would be the next one in 1913.

The minister of the imperial court, in agreement with war minister, presented the emperor with a list of gifts for the totaling 8,650 rubles, as well as the Order of the White Eagle, for Nicholas to present on May 27, 1911.⁷⁴ Back in 1910, when Asfandiar was still the heir, he had been awarded the rank of major general, and during his visit in 1911 he was enlisted in the His Majesty's Suite.

Asfandiar Khan next came to St. Petersburg in 1913 to celebrate the Romanov tercentenary. While Bukhara's emir was presented with a portrait of H.I.M., War Minister Sukhomlinov asked V.S. Kochubei, the Interim Governor of the Ministry of the Imperial

⁶⁹ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 173, l. 179 rev.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., l. 214.

⁷² Ibid., f. 468, op. 8, d. 1167, l. 2–2 rev., 10–10 rev.

⁷³ Ibid., f. 23, op. 1, d. 106, l. 9.

⁷⁴ Ibid., f. 468, op. 8, d. 1167, l. 23.

Court, whether such a gift would also be appropriate for the Khan of Khiva,⁷⁵ but was told that the latter was to receive a desk medallion, also adorned with diamonds.⁷⁶

In total, 8,914 rubles were spent on the gifts to the khan, while three pairs of Pavel Buhre gold watches were presented to his dignitaries.⁷⁷ They were to be delivered on February 23 at the commandant's entrance to the Winter Palace from Palace Square.⁷⁸ The ministry of war also paid for the gifts to other members of the khan's suite.⁷⁹

Along with the gifts, the emperor bestowed the title of "Highness" on the khan, at last equating his status with that of the Emir of Bukhara. Together with the emir, Asfandiar participated in the first divine service in the new cathedral mosque in St. Petersburg, which the St. Petersburg press covered with enthusiasm.⁸⁰ However, the Khan of Khiva did not have much time to enjoy his new title. In 1914, the First World War broke out, and in 1918, Asfandiar Khan was killed during a coup d'état by the henchmen of Junaid Khan, the leader of the Turkmen tribe.

Conclusion

The Russian government used the visits of their vassals as a way to communicate with them. At the same time, relying on the power structures of the protectorates, the Russian government in every possible way expanded their authority.

The Central Asian guests were always greeted with great ceremony. Before they arrived in the capital, the relevant ministries engaged in long discussions to plan the visits. The ministry of foreign affairs did not take part in the negotiations, and was only responsible for introducing the emir and the khan to the emperor. This suggests that the rulers were considered to be subjects of the Russian Empire, rather than foreign guests. Despite the lavish gifts and prestigious decorations, their dependence on the Russian Empire was emphasized throughout their stays. As a rule, the governor general of Turkestan had to approve the plan for the visits, and was kept fully informed as they proceeded.

There were discussions in 1909–10 about whether to annex Bukhara and Khiva. At the meeting in Tashkent on August 10–11, 1909, Governor-General Samsonov bluntly stated that the "accession" of these territories to Russia would resolve all difficulties in their relations.⁸¹ However, the ministry of foreign affairs remained implacably opposed. It was particularly concerned about the possible damage in relations with the other European powers. Moreover, when council of ministers considered the matter in January 1910, Prime Minister P.A. Stolypin supported the foreign minister when he said that any annexation would be premature.

⁷⁵ RGIA, op. 44, d. 1336, l. 10.

⁷⁶ Ibid., l. 28.

⁷⁷ Ibid., l. 16.

⁷⁸ Ibid., l. 13.

⁷⁹ Ibid., l. 56.

⁸⁰ *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*. February 23, 1913, p. 3

⁸¹ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 173, l. 193 rev.

During that period D. N. Logofet was commissioned to write two reports, *The Country of Lawlessness. The Khanate of Bukhara and Its Current State*, followed by *The Khanate of Bukhara under Russian protection*.⁸² Both scathing, they criticized the population's poverty while their leaders were spoiled by the Russian government's gifts and awards, as well as about the arbitrariness of Bukhara's officials, which was far from any notion of coexistence with Russia. Although they were only about Bukhara, the reports were also implicitly critical of Khiva, whose relations with the empire were more complicated.

Russia did maintain supervisory bodies in both of their protectorates. There was a political agent in Bukhara while the Amu Darya Department was responsible for Khiva.⁸³ Nevertheless, the rulers themselves stood higher in the imperial hierarchy than Turkestan's governor-general, since the former had the title of "Highness," and rank of general, while the Emir of Bukhara also had the title of adjutant general and the Order of St. Andrew. Therefore, whereas earlier on they personally met the governor during his visit, now these powers were completely entrusted to the other officials.

The Russian government's discourse during its meetings with the rulers of its protectorates did yield some positive results, especially in the relations with Emir of Bukhara Sayyid Abd al-Ahad, who often visited St. Petersburg. Contacts between Bukhara and Khiva's elites and Russian authorities steadily strengthened, and efforts to further integrate them into Russian society by training their youth in Russian educational institutions as well as acquiring real estate in Yalta and St. Petersburg also helped improve relations. However, there were important differences in the mentalities of East and West, with sometimes diametrically opposite ideas about life. Such nuances could not but affect the relationship between the metropolis and its protectorates.

For the time being, the foreign ministry succeeded in convincing the Russian government to maintain the fictional independence of its Central Asian protectorates. Nevertheless, officials in other departments carried out reforms to prepare the way for their integration into the empire. Meanwhile, the State Duma again raised the question of annexation at its plenary session on June 14, 1914. Its members decided to postpone considering the matter until the autumn, but the First World War intervened.

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⁸² D.N. Logofet, *Strana bespraviia*, 191.

⁸³ R.Iu. Pochekaev, *Gubernatory i khany*.

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